

# The Living Center

Marshall, MO

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**“I wept because I had no shoes until I met a man with no feet.”**

Author Unknown

Being a caregiver is no easy job. As nurse leaders, we often struggle with ways to improve caregiver sensitivity to the needs of others, particularly in nursing homes.

This project focused on creating a “lived experience” for staff in which they could “walk a mile” in a resident’s shoes.

The “Walk a Mile Program” began with newly hired NAs during the certified training class.

All caregivers were immersed in the following experiences for a 12 hour period.



Restricted mobility

Transferred with  
mechanical lift

Restricted limbs to  
mimic paralysis

“Set” unattended in  
day room for 3 to 4 hrs

Sat in wheelchairs for  
> 2 hrs



Sensory  
Impairment  
Eating altered  
consistency diets  
Wearing glasses  
coated with  
Vaseline  
Wearing cotton  
balls in ears



# Altered Dignity and Comfort

Wearing wet and  
“soiled” briefs

Used restroom in  
shower room with  
others present



All nursing home staff, residents, and families were aware of the project. Prior to the first experience, there were mixed feelings from all.

“It’s a good thing I didn’t have to do this to become a CNA because I wouldn’t have been one.”

Staff Member

However, most staff, residents and families expressed positive support.

One CNA completing the 12 hour experience stated, “I thought I was a good aide, but now I realize I can do so much more.”

"I think it's a great thing so  
they can see what we go  
through..."

Resident



“It's important for them to know how the residents feel and how staff makes them feel”

Resident's wife

To date, 12 caregivers have completed the “Walk a Mile” program.

Next steps include expanding to all NH staff as part of orientation.

Additional data to be used to  
evaluate the “Walk a Mile”  
Program include:

Staff turnover

Resident satisfaction

Staff evaluations

Employee satisfaction